

# Exhibit 16

# PAKISTAN 2021 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pakistan is a federal parliamentary republic. In 2018 the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party won the most National Assembly seats in the general elections, and the party's leader, Imran Khan, became prime minister. While independent observers noted technical improvements in the Election Commission of Pakistan's management of the polling process itself, observers, civil society organizations, and political parties raised concerns regarding preelection interference by military and intelligence agencies that created an uneven electoral playing field. Some political parties also alleged significant polling day irregularities.

Police have primary domestic security responsibility for most of the country. Local police are under the jurisdiction of provincial governments. Paramilitary organizations, including the Frontier Corps that operates in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and includes the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas, as well as the Rangers that operate in Sindh and Punjab, provide security services under the authority of the Ministry of Interior. The Frontier Corps's primary mission is security of the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, and the corps reports to the Ministry of Interior in peacetime and the army in times of conflict. The military is responsible for external security but plays a role in domestic security, including as the lead security agency in many areas of the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas. While military and intelligence services officially report to civilian authorities, they operate independently and without effective civilian oversight. Members of the security forces committed numerous abuses according to domestic and international nongovernmental organizations.

Significant human rights issues included credible reports of: unlawful or arbitrary killings, including extrajudicial killings by the government or its agents; forced disappearance by the government or its agents; torture and cases of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment by the government or its agents; harsh and life-threatening prison conditions; arbitrary detention; political prisoners; politically motivated reprisal against individuals in another country, including killings, kidnappings, or violence; arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy;

support to the Taliban, a nonstate armed militant group that recruited and used child soldiers; serious restrictions on free expression and media, including violence against journalists, unjustified arrests and disappearances of journalists, censorship, and criminal defamation laws; serious restrictions on internet freedom including site blocking; substantial interference with the freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of association, including overly restrictive laws for the operation of nongovernmental organizations and civil society organizations; severe restrictions of religious freedom; restrictions on freedom of movement; serious government corruption; lack of investigation of and accountability for gender-based violence; trafficking in persons; crimes involving violence or threats of violence targeting members of racial and ethnic minorities; crimes involving violence or threats of violence targeting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or intersex persons; the existence or use of laws criminalizing consensual same-sex sexual conduct between adults; restrictions on workers' freedom of association; and use of the worst forms of child labor.

There was a lack of government accountability, and abuses, including corruption, often went unpunished, fostering a culture of impunity among perpetrators, whether official or unofficial. Authorities seldom punished government officials for reported human rights abuses or acts of corruption.

Violence, abuse, and social and religious intolerance by militant organizations and other nonstate actors, both local and foreign, contributed to a culture of lawlessness. Terrorist violence and human rights abuses by nonstate actors contributed to human rights problems, with terrorist violence exceeding that of the prior year. Terrorist and cross-border militant attacks against civilians, soldiers, and police caused hundreds of casualties. Military, police, and law enforcement agencies continued to carry out significant campaigns against militant and terrorist groups. As of September 30, terrorism fatalities stood at 495, compared with 506 fatalities in all of 2020, according to the South Asia Terrorism Portal, a database compiled by the public interest advocacy organization Institute for Conflict Management, which collects statistics on terrorism and low intensity warfare in South Asia.

concerns, however, that laws prohibiting some workers in essential services from leaving their employment without the consent of the employer allowed for criminal penalties that included prison labor.

The law defines trafficking in persons as recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing, or obtaining another person (or attempting to do so) through force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of compelled labor or commercial sex. The penalty for conviction of trafficking in persons is sufficient to deter violations. Regarding sex trafficking, however, by allowing for a fine in lieu of imprisonment, penalties were not commensurate with those for other serious crimes, such as rape. Lack of political will, the reported complicity of officials in labor trafficking, as well as federal and local government structural changes, contributed to the failure of authorities to enforce federal law relating to forced labor. Resources, inspections, and remediation were inadequate.

The use of forced and bonded labor was widespread and common in several industries across the country. An NGO focusing on bonded labor estimated that 4.5 million workers nationwide were trapped in bonded labor, primarily in Sindh and Punjab, but also in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The UN Development Program reported an estimate that more than 70 percent of bonded laborers were children. Traffickers also targeted lower-caste Hindus as well as Christians and Muslims with lower socioeconomic backgrounds especially for forced and bonded labor. Bonded labor was reportedly present in the agricultural sector, including the cotton, sugarcane, and wheat industries, and in the brick, coal, and carpet industries. Bonded laborers often were unable to determine when their debts were paid in full, in part, because contracts were rare, and employers could take advantage of bonded laborers' illiteracy to alter debt amounts or the price laborers paid for goods they acquired from their employers. In some cases landowners restricted laborers' movements with armed guards or sold laborers to other employers for the price of the laborers' debts.

Ties among landowners, industry owners, and influential politicians hampered effective elimination of the problem. For example some local police did not pursue landowners or brick kiln owners effectively because they believed higher-ranking police, pressured by politicians or the owners themselves, would not support their efforts to carry out legal investigations. Some bonded laborers